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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0663
INFO ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0034
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0037
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SUBJECT: OMAN MEDIA REACTION: NORMALIZATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

¶1. SUMMARY: The role of Arab states in forwarding peace with Israel took prominence in Omani papers this week, with the state Arabic daily rejecting "normalization" in uncharacteristically harsh terms. A conundrum facing Arabs, opined another, is just what "normalization" means. END SUMMARY.

NORMALIZATION "A NEW CATASTROPHE"

¶2. On July 29, government Arabic daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) strongly criticized normalizing ties with Israel, saying Israel continues to commit "heinous crimes against Palestinians and the people of Gaza." The editorial asks Arabs to "wake up" lest they find themselves in a "new catastrophe." In "Jews and Normalization Sacrifices":

"Throughout history, the behavior of Jews has been based in part on procrastination and cornering others. These are people who think they are the chosen ones and have killed prophets and altered the words of Allah and have perpetrated lies. Israel has committed heinous crimes against Palestinians and people of Gaza, and still continues to do so, it has been stalling the peace process, and it has also destroyed all educational facilities in Gaza to make sure that the next generations of Palestinians are without education. On top of all of this; they and the U.S. Middle East envoy are asking Arabs for normalization! If Arabs do not wake up now, we will find ourselves in the middle of a new catastrophe."

THE MEANING OF NORMALIZATION

¶3. On July 28 private Arabic daily "Al Watan" (circulation 42,000) ask what exactly is meant by "normalization". "Say something good or be quiet" said:

"The U.S. Administration and Senator Mitchell must understand that Arabs will not reward Israel for its continuous violations of human rights. The U.S. administration should either state clearly what its real intention behind these calls for 'normalizations', because we are sure that it is not peace."

HURTADO